AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the following paragraph in the section of the specification labeled "**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**" as provided below (no new matter has been introduced):

[0008] During assembly of conventional hydrodynamic bearing system 100, bearing element 114 is press-fit onto shaft 112 which is then inserted into the inner cylindrical bore of bearing sleeve 116. Shield 120 is then placed onto step 126 of the bearing sleeve such that shaft 112 protrudes through cylindrical opening 132. Shield 120 is laser welded to the bearing sleeve. Laser welding is identified by reference numeral 124. Lubricating oil 118 is next injected into the bearing gap through oil fill hole 128.

Please amend the following paragraph in the section of the specification labeled "**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**" as provided below (no new matter has been introduced):

[0011] In one aspect of the present invention, a hydrodynamic bearing system is provided having a bearing sleeve and a shaft inserted into an inner cylindrical bore of the bearing sleeve. A bearing gap is formed between the shaft and the bearing sleeve, the bearing gap being filled with a lubricating oil. A shield encloses the bearing sleeve. The shield is secured ~~at to an~~to an end surface of the bearing sleeve at a position on the end surface that is distanced from the bearing gap. The shield does not contact the lubricating oil.